

Message Text

SECRET

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47

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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R 221150Z NOV 75
FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2928
SECDEF/OSD/ISA
INFO CHUSMTM DHAHRAN

S E C R E T JIDDA 7792

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, MARR, SA, US
SUBJECT: SAUDI URGENT ARMS REQUEST

REF: A. STATE 257095

B. JIDDA 7224

C. JIDDA 6513

1. WE ARE STILL CONCERNED THAT WE HAVE NOT GIVEN MINISTER OF DEFENSE PRINCE SULTAN AN ANSWER TO HIS 17 SEPTEMBER LETTER (REF C) CONCERNING SAUDI ARABIA URGENT ARMS REQUESTS FOR ARMS AND THAT THE ONLY ANSWERS GIVEN TO HIS 15 JUNE LETTER ARE THE TOW IMPACT PACKAGE AND 155MM HOWITZERS.

2. PRINCE SULTAN IS RETURNING FROM EUROPE IN APPROXIMATELY 10 DAYS. WE FULLY EXPECT THAT HE WILL ASK ABOUT THE STATUS OF THE URGENT REQUEST LIST.

3. WE ARE FULLY AWARE THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY AND OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ARE IN THE PROCESS OF PREPARING AN INDEPTH PLAN FOR DELIVERY AND TRAINING. WE ALSO RECOGNIZE THAT THE BEST POSSIBLE DELIVERY DATES WILL NOT BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SAUDI PERCEPTION OF SECSTATE 2 SEPTEMBER 1975 VISIT.

4. BECAUSE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS SUBJECT TO SULTAN, WE

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RECOMMEND THAT EVERY EFFORT BE MADE BEFORE AMBASSADOR AKINS'

DEPARTURE BY STATE AND DOD TO:

A. COMPLETE THE INDEPTH PLAN AND TO BRIEF THE SAUDIS.

B. INSURE THAT THE PLAN INCLUDES AN IMPACT PACKAGE CONTAINING EACH ITEM OF EQUIPMENT ON THE LIST. THIS WILL ALLOW EARLIEST START OF TRAINING BY THE SAUDI ARABIAN ARMY AND CAN POSSIBLY COUNTERBALANCE SAUDI DISSATISFACTION WITH THE DATES OF DELIVERY OF MOST OF THE EQUIPMENT.

C. INSURE THAT THE PLAN COVERS TRAINING REQUIREMENTS ON AN INDEPTH BASIS. THIS CAN AND SHOULD BE USED IN BRIEFING THE SAUDIS TO PROVE TO THEM THAT THEY SIMPLY CAN NOT ABSORB THE EQUIPMENT AT A FASTER RATE THAN IT IS BEING OFFERED.

D. WE EXPECT NO LITTLE DIFFICULTY IN GETTING SULTAN'S AGREEMENT TO SLOWER DELIVERY TIMES. HOWEVER, WE MAY BE ABLE TO CONVINCE HIM THAT THE NEW SCHEDULE IS MORE REALISTIC BECAUSE MATCHING DELIVERIES WITH TRAINING CAPACITY ENABLE THE SMOOTH ABSORPTION OF THE EQUIPMENT.

E. TO HELP SELL THIS IDEA TO SULTAN WE SUGGEST SELECTING A SMALL NUMBER OF BRIGHT, PRO-AMERICAN SAUDI OFFICERS AND SEND THEM TO THE UNITED STATES FOR A TOUR OF DEFENSE INDUSTRIES WITH BRIEFING ABOUT PRODUCTION TIME PROBLEMS, COSTS, ETC. WE COULD USE THEIR FINDINGS AND EXPERIENCES--ALL COLLECTED FIRST-HAND--TO HELP CONVINCE SULTAN OF THE SOUNDNESS OF THE US POSITION.

5. CHUSMTM BG AHMANN FULLY CONCURS.
AKINS

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NNN

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